



Envision Arlington Standing Committee

Date: Wednesday, April 14, 2021
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Location: Remote participation via Zoom

Minutes

Members in attendance: Scott Lever, Greg Christiana, Juli Brazile, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Alex Bagnall, Michael Brownstein

Other attendees: Lenard Diggins, Elizabeth Dray, Tal Unrad, Jagat Adhiya

1. Introductions

Tal Unrad is interested in learning more about Envision Arlington and possibly getting involved.

Elizabeth Dray thanked Envision Arlington for publishing candidates' statements.

Jagat Adhiya would like to learn more about Envision Arlington.

2. Review and approve March minutes

Elisabeth: correction in agenda item 4: replace "worked on the doc (PDF)" with "worked on the mailing"

Michael: replace "Police Civilian Review Board Study Group" with "Police Civilian Advisory Board Study Group"

March minutes approved with these edits.

3. Discuss public participation during Standing Committee meetings

Scott introduced a proposed change in rules around public comments.

Alex appreciates the casual nature of discussions at our meetings.

Juli spoke about inappropriateness of political comments, and the desire to strike a balance between rules and casual conversation.

Len suggested running any rule changes by Doug Heim.

Elisabeth suggested that non-agenda public comments should be allowed but limited like with other committee meetings.

Michael discussed inappropriateness of public comment that involved political endorsement of a candidate.

Scott asked about the appropriateness of the Standing Committee endorsing Town Meeting warrant articles. Juli explained that it depends on the nature of the article, but sparingly.

Juli promoted the idea of adopting rules similar to other committees with regard to public participation.

Greg discussed balancing the desire for public input and running efficient, focused meetings.

4. Update on Police Civilian Advisory Board Study Group

Michael discussed his role as liaison from the Standing Committee to Police Civilian Advisory Board Study Group. Most recent meetings were March 18 and April 8. An open question that's been raised is how to bring public voices into the process. Chief Flaherty and Town Counsel Heim have been helpful in providing background information. Committee has planned to meet 90 minutes per month, but at some point will need to drill into specific areas that

One specific idea is to find nearby exemplars and experiences from similar police civilian advisory boards in nearby communities. Another idea is about communicating with Arlington at large and getting feedback.

Next meeting is May 6 at 7PM.

5. Task Group Updates

Scott gave an update from attending this week's DTG meeting. They discussed programming for the Fall. One of their two co-chairs is stepping down, and discussions have been had with Doug Heim about the process for replacing chairs.

6. Discuss Town Elections and EA Support

Elisabeth and Sue worked on the first virtual Candidates Night, working with the League of Women Voters. They worked on screening of questions and pulling together candidate statements for Town Meeting Members. Kudos to Kate Leary for putting the Google Form together, and Juli and Greg as well.

Alex and Len worked on the Town Meeting Member candidate event. Participation varied considerably across precincts. Participants generally seemed hungry for this kind of participation and interaction with each other. About 20 people ended up chatting in the main room after returning from per-precinct breakout rooms. The breakout rooms worked smoothly. In the future we might consider doing both a virtual event and in-person event.

7. Discuss Advisory Board Meeting

Greg apologized for the short notice when scheduling the meeting. More notice will be given in the future.

Greg reviewed his notes from the meeting.

Len suggests that one hour with the Advisory Board once a year is not enough time, and would like to meet more than once annually.

Juli suggested that we need to pick a few ideas and commit to them.

Scott asked if anyone is interested in creating a Civic Engagement Task Group. Greg moved to create such a Task Group.

Juli asked what it means to create a "Civic Engagement Task Group".

After brief discussion, Greg withdrew his motion and will continue to reach out to interested parties and prepare a proposal at next month's Standing Committee meeting.

8. Discussion on the Annual Town Survey

Scott discussed the need to do analysis on the Survey data. Juli discussed the rough timing of releasing a report. The final report is typically a page or two covering each section of the Survey. Juli pointed out that the Town website has historical reports, with Town Meeting reports on the Town Meeting website.

9. Discussion of Fall 2021 events

Scott discussed ambiguity about whether in-person events will be held. Len has not heard anything, which probably means that events like Town Day are unlikely to happen given the lead time that such events require. Scott asked Len to confirm with the Select Board administrator.

10. Budget update

Elisabeth has no budget update for this month, but expects reports back from Task Groups by next month.

11. New Business

Alex discussed "protest art" depicting police and racial justice protesters that was reviewed by high-school teachers, then artists, then the Select Board. No public funds were used for the creation of the banners. This was picked up by local news.

Scott gave an update about terms of Standing Committee members. Specifically, Sue and Elisabeth are stepping down at the end of their term in June. Scott discussed an idea for announcing openings for chair positions across Task Groups, taking applications, and the Standing Committee voting on those applications.

Scott also gave an update from discussion with Doug Heim about the process for selecting a Standing Committee chair.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.